



## King County

### Metropolitan King County Council

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September 29, 2008

The Honorable Ron Sims

King County Executive

701 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 3210

Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Sims:

As you are aware, the news regarding the local economy is increasingly negative. We believe that the government of King County should continue to make many of the same tough choices that our residents make in their household budgets when money becomes tight. Toward that end, we urge your immediate implementation of the following short-term savings and efficiencies. The leadership of the Council's Budget Review and Adoption Committee (BRAC) believe implementing these strategies immediately will help King County weather this downturn in the county's finances. We believe these changes will help close out 2008 in as strong a financial position as possible to help us deal with the impending decisions that we must make during the upcoming 2009 annual budget process.

The magnitude of the projected 2009 budget deficit is unprecedented in the history of King County and extraordinarily difficult decisions will need to be made to balance our 2009 budget. We realize that these recommendations do not solve our budget shortfall; however, we believe the following measures will demonstrate our shared focus on reduced spending during these tough budget times:

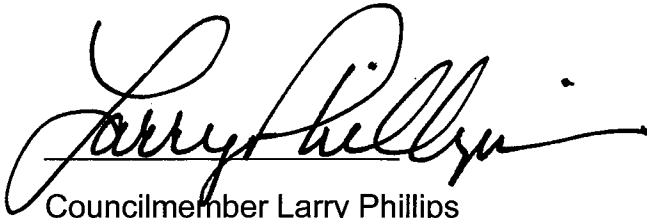
- **Eliminate the use of overtime** shifts whenever possible and otherwise limit the use of overtime.
- **Re-examine initiatives** that have not delivered anticipated results, such as the annexation initiative. Suspend new initiatives that may increase the cost of government such as the recently announced "Bike and Walk" incentive program.

- **Extend the replacement period for vehicles** and tie vehicle replacement to the mileage and condition of the vehicle.
- **Cut all vacant, non-essential Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions** that are not essential to the operation of government. Re-evaluate the need for these positions at a later date.
- **Cut all non-essential Term Limited Temporary (TLT) Positions** in 2008. For 2009, include only TLT's related to essential functions.
- **Eliminate the Copy Center** which has not proven itself to be a viable line of county business. The current model in which all agencies in the downtown campus support the Copy Center regardless of whether they use those services or not is untenable, and unnecessarily increases the cost of county business.
- **Implement a hiring freeze** on all staff where there would be no threat to public safety or continued operation of essential county government functions.
- **Ban all out-of-jurisdiction travel** where this action will not interfere with essential county government operations or financial advocacy for our county government.
- **Control communications costs** by reducing or eliminating the costs associated with unnecessary communications, cell phones and printing.
- **Freeze construction spending for capital projects not yet under contract.** Do not enter into construction contracts for capital projects funded by the general fund until completion of the 2009 budget, except for those projects required for ensuring continued operation of essential county government functions.
- **Reduce operating costs.** Immediately identify and implement any changes that could result in a reduction of operating costs or energy consumption without interfering with the provision of essential county government services. This would include reducing energy consumption by encouraging employees and departments to turn off lights and computers when not in use and any other power reduction options considered feasible.

Of course, we understand that these changes alone will not solve the county's budget shortfall, but these belt-tightening measures are many of the same tough choices that households are forced to make during challenging economic times. Any savings we can achieve from these changes will help ease the pressures created by the downturn in the local economy and county revenue sources.

We understand the financial challenges before us and look forward to working with you to adopt a balanced 2009 county budget that meets our first priority to protect public safety, health and quality of life. With a mutual commitment to the success of King County, we can accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,



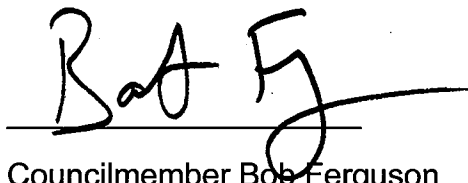
Councilmember Larry Phillips

Chair, BRAC



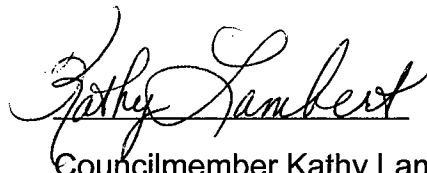
Councilmember Jane Hague

Panel Chair, BRAC



Councilmember Bob Ferguson

Panel Chair, BRAC



Councilmember Kathy Lambert

Panel Vice-Chair, BRAC

CC: County Councilmembers

Sue Rahr, King County Sheriff

Dan Satterberg, King County Prosecuting Attorney

Scott Noble, King County Assessor

Bruce Hilyer, Presiding Judge, King County Superior Court

Barbara Linde, Presiding Judge, King County District Court

Ross Baker, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Saroja Reddy, Policy Staff Director, King County Council